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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0518**

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The Honorable Ken Salazar  
Secretary of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Gary Locke  
Secretary of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Drive, NW  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Salazar and Secretary Locke,

As you know, California's reservoirs are at dangerous low historic levels and our state is facing a long term water supply crisis. This water supply crisis threatens to cripple our state unless immediate action is taken by the Department of Interior (DOI) and the Department of Commerce (DOC). As you know, I, as well as the entire San Joaquin Valley congressional delegation, Governor Schwarzenegger and his Administration have called upon your departments to initiate reconsultation on the two biological opinions that have exacerbated the water supply crisis in California. I have also repeatedly called upon your departments to mitigate the devastating economic impacts of these decisions, and am again calling upon your departments to immediately initiate reconsultation and to mitigate the economic impacts of the regulatory drought.

As you know, the situation is especially dire at the San Luis Reservoir, currently at only 20% of capacity, which is the main source of water for parts of Southern California and many farms in the San Joaquin Valley. Central Valley Water Project (CVP) deliveries to the San Joaquin Valley are at 10% of normal and State Water Project (SWP) deliveries are at 40%, forcing over 425,000- acres of some of the world's most productive farmland out of production. Over 35,000 farmers and farmworkers are out of work and over \$710 million has been lost in farm revenues to date. The sad irony is that some of the very communities that grow food for our nation and the world now see their residents in food lines, and unemployment as high as 40%. Southern California and East Bay Area residents are also impacted, where many urban water districts have or are expected to institute water rationing.

Since the 1990s, water supplies for agricultural and urban water agencies that depend on the state and federal projects have been reduced as a result of regulatory actions that have reallocated water to environmental uses. The result is that *even in normal hydrologic conditions*, our state faces reduced water deliveries, causing a long term water supply crisis. Unfortunately, this regulatory drought has been severely exacerbated by the recent biological opinions issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), which mean even less water for our parched state. With the implementation of these two biological

opinions, the CVP and will have near ZERO water supplies and the SWP will be severely impacted as well, even under normal hydrologic conditions. This is unacceptable.


The lack of water is sending a ripple effect throughout the state and nation's economy when we can least afford it, threatening to prolong the recession, delay economic recovery, impact the supply of fresh fruits and vegetables as well as other goods and services and adversely affect consumers throughout the county. The unemployment rate in the San Joaquin Valley is over 15%, well above the national average of 9%, and 5.3% of all active mortgages in my district were in foreclosure as of July 15th, well above the national average of 1.7%. Our state's deficit has resulted in the worst budget crisis our state has ever seen, with little hope for a significant increase in revenues, especially if the state is not able to provide reliable water deliveries to the state's businesses, farms and 23 million residents that rely upon the state and federal projects.

What's worse, the biological opinions produce little to no benefit to the endangered species they are trying to protect, and are in conflict with one another. For these reasons, the Director of California's Department of Water Resources wrote to USFWS and NMFS, respectively, requesting reconsultation of the biological opinions. I, along with other members of congress have called upon your departments to initiate reconsultation as well. On September 1, 2009, Governor Schwarzenegger also called upon both departments to reconsult or to provide the state with a path to address the crisis, stating, "...these biological opinions include overlapping and conflicting actions and restrictions that provide little or no fisheries benefit, at a high cost to the state's economy.... Ironically, these opinions work against each other, especially in wet years, which may lead to species conflict and devastating water shortages in following dry years."

I am also extremely troubled that the biological opinions attribute the state and federal pumps as the single cause for the decline of fisheries in the Delta. Consideration of the various factors affecting the Delta, including non-native species that are predators of endangered species in the Delta, climate change, wastewater discharge, storm water run-off, power plant operations and other diversions must be analyzed as part of the reconsultation process.

Again, I request that that your departments immediately intervene in this crisis and that you take action to mitigate the economic impact of the regulatory drought and direct the USFWS and NMFS to initiate reconsultation of the two biological opinions. I am committed to working with both departments and the state toward both short term and long term solutions that ensure a reliable water supply for California.

Sincerely,



Dennis Cardoza  
Member of Congress